April 19, 1944
Ithaca, N.Y.

Hi there, Everybody—!

I promised I'd write you, but I'm afraid I'd have sadly neglected it had it not been for my "vacation". They seem to think here that athlete's foot belongs on the toes. When mine spread to my ankles, arms and hands, they put me to bed. That was on last Thursday morning (the 13th), and I expect to be here at least another week. I had been having it treated the previous week, but it didn't improve. At first they were using bichloride, but it burned my skin rather badly and the fungus spread some more. It's coming along all right now, tho'.

At the end of indoctrination, which lasts three weeks, we are sworn in as "middies" and get our uniforms. That will occur one week from today. I'll have missed two of the three weeks, so I may have to start over. That won't be bad — I'll be home during buck season if that is the case, and if I get home.

I was thinking that Bud, Jion, Neb & I should have been at Mattole for Easter week. I'll never forget the "swim" to the coast two years ago. I've never had a better time in my life and that's no fooling. Mattole and Nellie Mae are what I'm fighting for here at the battle of Guadalcornell.

This is heaven compared to Asbury Park. We have beautiful food and beautiful is the word I want, too. We are housed in the dorms here and the regular dorm furniture is being used, three-quarter beds, office-sized desks, swivel chairs. There are three of us in our "suite." We have three rooms, 2 with closets & bureaus and they're plenty roomy. Quite unlike Asbury Park where 8, 10, or 12 lived in a room the size of your library. Our courses are Recognition, Ordnance, Mech. Drawing, and Seamanship, which includes Naval administration, Naval Regulations, Naval Correspondence, the various codes, and actual Seamanship. Later on we'll

have Navigation and other courses. The work is easy enough, but the quantity is preposterous. Here's a ferinstance: One night we had 127 pages to read for Seamanship, 52 pages to read for Ordnance, and ⅓ of the Morse alphabet to learn. We were supposed to know all the stuff in those pages too. It's easy to pick out what they'll ask us in quizzes tho', so it's not too rough. Incidentally, we have quizzes practically every day in each subject, which in my opinion is highly impractical. We have 2 hours of drill and 1 hour of calisthentics 5 days a week to keep us fit. We have recreation from supper to 8:00 P.M. and we use it for study, naturally. Study hours are from 8-11 P.M. when lights have to go out. Then, too, we draw a ten hour watch about three times a month.

Liberty is from 3:30 Sat. afternoon to 1:00 a.m. Sunday and 9:00 A.M. Sunday until

7:30 Sunday evening. After we become middies we'll have liberty straight thru without having to return Sat. nite at all. Oh, yes — we get out of bed at 5:50.

From our pay they deduct everything but $10 per month for uniforms, etc. It's not as bad as it sounds. That buys pencils and razor blades and a couple of shows, which is all we have time for. What's left over I'll stow in apple-boxes for after the war.

We've had uniforms fitted. The zipper is a wonderful piece of machinery.

Would you send me Nebby's address? I've owed him a letter for months and the address I have is Taft, California. I assume that's wrong.

Give my regards to the family and tell S.B. to take it easy on the nine-on-one-side-'leven-on-the-other-side pointers.

As ever,

Darrel.

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AIR MAIL

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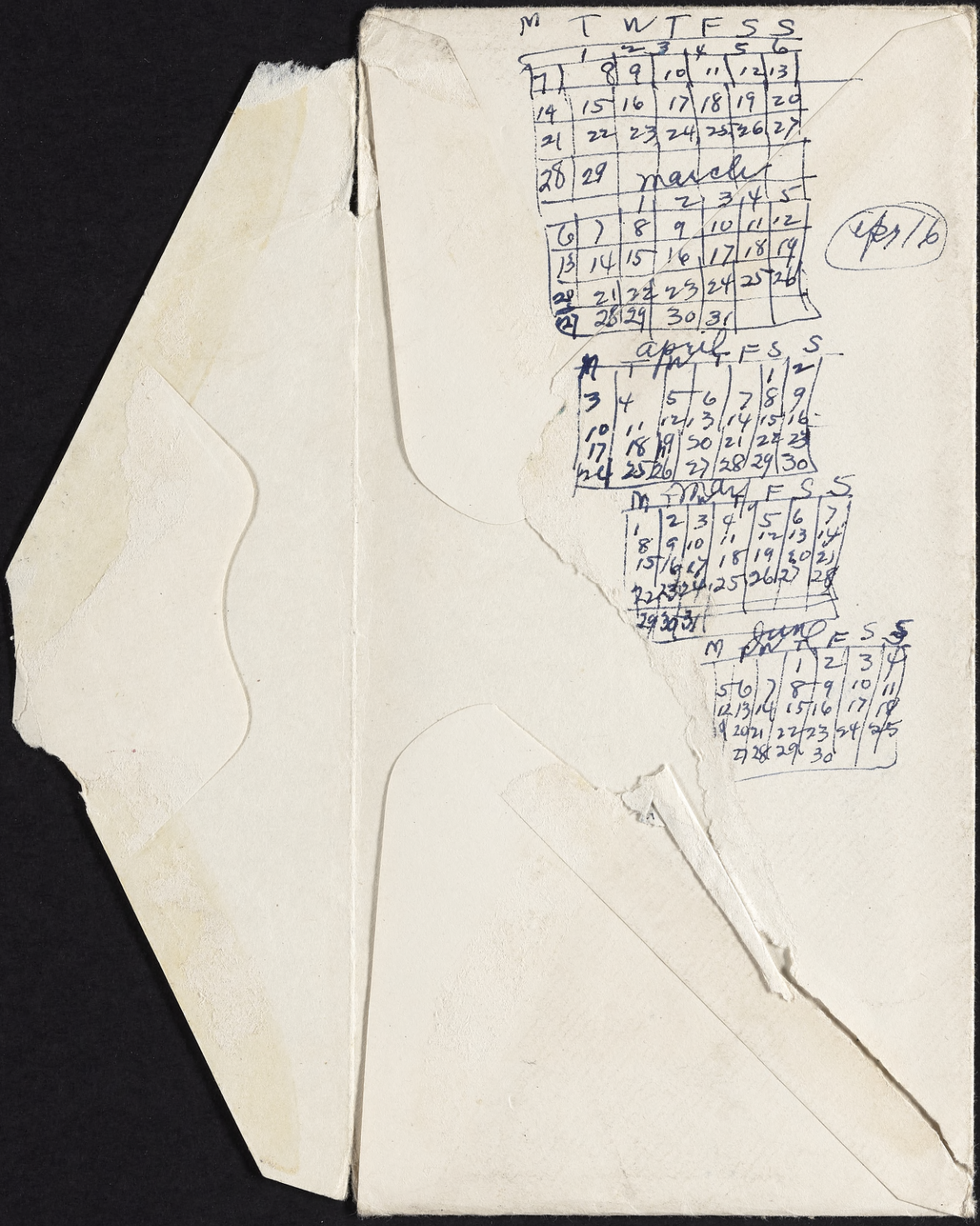
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